

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT
POLICY

Voluntary - Public

Date: 7/12/2018

GAIN Report Number: E18049

EU-28

Post: Brussels USEU

Priorities of the Austrian Presidency

Report Categories:

Policy and Program Announcements

Approved By:

Jennifer Lappin

Prepared By:

Sophie Bolla

Report Highlights:

On July 1, 2018, Austria took over the rotation Presidency of the Council of the EU. This report provides an overview of the Presidency's priorities for the next six months.

General Information:

On July 1, 2018, the Austrian presidency took over the rotating EU Council Presidency for the next six months. Until the end of the year, Austria will be responsible for scheduling and chairing all ministerial meetings, with the exception of the Foreign Affairs Council. Austria is the third country of the [Trio Presidency Program](#) composed of Estonia, Bulgaria and Austria. A Trio Presidency Program is a common program developed by three consecutive Council presidencies to ensure continuity in their actions. The next ‘Trio Presidency’ is made up of Romania (first half of 2019), Finland (second half of 2019) and Croatia (first half of 2020).

Austria laid down three main priorities for the Council’s work over the next six months:

- Security and the fight against illegal migration
- Securing prosperity and competitiveness through digitalization, and
- Stability in the European neighborhood – EU perspective of the Western Balkans/South Eastern Europe.

The Presidency’s Program

The Austrian Presidency also identified specific priorities for agriculture, food safety and environmental issues in [its program](#):

Agriculture:

- The Commission’s proposal on the Common Agricultural policy post 2020
- Finalization of the Spirit Drinks Regulation, which aligns legislation to the Treaty of Lisbon and deals with definitions, labelling and geographical indications.

Food safety:

- Plant health and controls regulation—work on approximately 20 delegated or implementing acts following the adoption of the Regulations on animal health and official controls adopted in 2016 and 2017.
- Transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain

Environment:

- Review of the EU Forest strategy and EU activities on deforestation
- Technical implementation of the Paris agreement

Agenda

The tentative calendar of meetings under the Austrian Presidency (July – December 2018) can be downloaded from the Council’s website at <https://www.eu2018.at/dam/jcr:0b0009a0-5c64-40ed-925f->

[11b479b0cd53/Draft%20Presidency%20Calendar%2028.06.2018.pdf](#)

Useful links

- GAIN Report - [CAP Reform proposals criticized by EU farmers and Member States](#)
- [Spirit Drinks Regulation proposal](#)
- [DG SANTE – Official Controls webpage](#)